

REMARKS

Minor typographical errors have been corrected in the claims.

In the Office Action dated May 7, 2003, Claims 1-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious in view of Admitted Prior Art (APA) combined with Bowden, Jr. (U.S. 4,397,607).

The present invention, as exemplified in Claim 1, is to a socket for a connector that has a cavity for allowing a plug to be inserted therein, a protuberance provided within the cavity, a through hole defined substantially at the center of the protuberance, for allowing a plug extremity to be inserted from an outer end thereof, and, opposite thereto, a connector element disposed at an inner end of the through hole. An opening is defined in the wall of the through hole by cutting off a part of the wall, such that when a shutter is inserted into the opening, the through hole is blocked by the shutter by an urging force of an elastic member, while the through hole is released from a blocked state upon the insertion of the plug. The remaining claims are to more specific embodiments, while Claims 12 and 13 are to a method of assembling a socket for a connector. Such a socket or method are not taught or suggested in the cited references.

In the Office Action, it is alleged that the APA socket for an electrical connector comprises a cavity for allowing a plug to be inserted therein, and that Bowden, Jr. discloses a shutter mechanism (108) for blocking a through hole of a socket (50) which is released from a blocked state by insertion of a plug (72).

The Office Action then alleges that it would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art to provide a shutter biased by an elastic member for blocking the through hole of the APA

socket in view of the teachings of Bowden, Jr. and that the various arrangements of the shutter in relation to the socket housing is deemed an obvious location of parts and socket design.

Applicant respectfully disagrees with these allegations.

The features of the APA Figures 17 and 18 and the distinctions between the socket of those figures and the present claimed socket are discussed in Applicant's specification.

It appears as though the Office Action is mischaracterizing the receptacle of Bowden, Jr. The receptacle of Bowden, Jr. is for use with a two-pronged plug (not including a grounding prong) which is commonly found in use in homes for 110 volt power. The receptacle requires two prongs for it to be operative and it will not function with solely one prong (plug extremity) as in the present invention.

In the receptacle of Bowden, Jr., a blocked through hole is not released from a blocked state upon the insertion of a plug extremity into the through hole, as defined in the present claimed invention.

Referring to Fig. 19 of Bowden, Jr., when a single prong 72A is inserted into a through hole, a slide 100A is displaced to release a different through hole from a blocked state. The through hole encountered by prong 72A remains in a blocked state by the presence of slide 100B across the through hole.

For at least these reasons, Applicant believes that the present claimed socket for a connector is distinct from and unobvious over any combination of the cited references.

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With respect to the method of Claims 12 and 13, it appears that the Bowden, Jr. disclosure does not describe insertion of a shutter or shutters in a socket defining a narrow opening in a rear face of a socket housing as defined in the method claims. For at least this reason, it is believed that method claims 12 and 13 are patentable over the cited art.


In view of the above remarks, Applicant believes that Claims 1-13 are patentable over the art and early action towards allowance thereof is respectfully requested.

If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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